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1. At the beginning of 1943 the Belgian Communist Party (BCP) established the Mouvement de Defense Paysanne (Peasants' Defense Movement - MDP). The MDP program was based upon the agrarian program of the BCP which was opposed to the Boerenfront (Peasant Front) and other farmer groups which, the Communists claimed, had organized the peasants in order to better the position of the large landowners. In reality, it was an effort on the part of the BCP to penetrate the ranks of small landowners and farmers.
2. The first national director of MDP, Georges Vandenboom, was arrested by the Gestapo in early 1944, and Jean Blanche succeeded him. In February 1945 Gaston Moulin replaced Blanche and is still the secretary-general of MDP. Moulin is an extremely intelligent, educated and cultured man, an agricultural engineer who enjoys sufficient income from his large farm holdings to relieve him of the need to work for a living. This enables him to devote a great deal of time and energy to his Communist activities.
3. The real control over MDP, however, is maintained by Edgar Lalmand, secretary-general of the BCP, who issues the orders and holds a tight rein over its policies and development.
4. From its founding until early 1945 MDP was financed by the BCP. Since January 1945 MDP has published a weekly paper, L'Essor Paysan, in both French and Flemish. Because of its effective work against German occupation authorities, DP was at the peak of its popularity in 1945, at which time there were four full-time employees at MDP national headquarters and four or five full or part-time workers in various Belgian provinces. The post-war rejuvenation of the Boerenfront, the clumsy attempts of the BCP to force the merger of other farm groups with MDP and poor management of MDP funds have combined to reduce the size and influence of this Communist-front organization. At the present time it is barely in existence, its regular workers have been leaving and its paper is published irregularly.

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